



## Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Division of Water, Public Health offer tips for a safe and healthy summer enjoying Kentucky's water resources**

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (July 2, 2015)** – This holiday weekend, many Kentuckians will flock to one of the many rivers, lakes and creeks across the state to boat, fish, swim, canoe or otherwise enjoy the water. The Kentucky Division of Water (DOW) and the Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) offer these safety tips to help you safely enjoy Kentucky's abundant water resources.

Over the past several years, concerted efforts have been made to improve the quality of Kentucky's natural waterways. Many federal, state and local programs have been implemented to reduce water pollution from various sources, including those that are industrial, residential and agricultural in nature. Reducing pollutants is critical to providing safe recreational opportunities for the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Despite many water quality improvements, the potential for human health risks continue to exist in any waterbody. The DOW and the DPH advise following these safety guidelines when enjoying Kentucky's rivers, streams, lakes and reservoirs. By using a common sense approach, the risks of experiencing water-derived health issues can be greatly decreased.

DOW and DPH recommend that the public follow the guidelines below to reduce health risks:

1. Avoid ingesting or inhaling water.
2. Thoroughly clean hands and other areas that have come in contact with water.
3. Avoid allowing open wounds to have direct contact with the water.
4. Avoid areas where swimming or harmful algal bloom (HAB) advisories have been issued.

5. Avoid areas with obvious odors or surface scums.
6. Avoid getting in waters after heavy rainfall events, especially in dense residential, urban and agricultural areas.
7. Avoid areas below wastewater treatment facility outfalls, animal feedlots, straight pipes or other obvious sources of pollution.
8. Restrict pets and livestock from drinking the water if a bright green or blue-green surface scum is present.

For more information concerning the quality of Kentucky's water resources, the public can access the Kentucky Water Health Portal. Information such as advisories and impairments can be found at <http://watermaps.ky.gov/WaterHealthPortal>.

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